



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/892,614	06/28/2001	George Robert Atkinson	078883-0133	4908
22428	7590	05/09/2003		
FOLEY AND LARDNER SUITE 500 3000 K STREET NW WASHINGTON, DC 20007			EXAMINER	DOUGLAS, STEVEN O
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3751	
DATE MAILED: 05/09/2003				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Offic Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/892,614	ATKINSON ET AL.
	Examiner Steven O. Douglas	Art Unit 3751

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 April 2003.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-4, 13 and 14 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 5 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 6-12 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election with traverse of Group II. in Paper No. 5 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the Examiner has failed to prove that a serious burden exist. This is not found persuasive because Examiner set forth in the restriction requirement the divergent subject matter that exists between Groups I,II and II (i.e. Examiner's showing of distinctness between the groups). Although each group addresses microarraying systems, the subject matter (i.e. searches) go in diverging directions. As, for example, the search to determine the patentability of Claims 1 and 13 is not required in determining the patentability of claims 5 and 14. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 13 and 14 are withdrawn from consideration.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Overbeck et al.

The Overbeck et al. reference discloses a microarraying apparatus comprising a well platform Mw (see Fig. 4a), but does not disclose it as having height adjustment associated therewith. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the well platform to be height adjustable, since it has been held that the

provision of adjustability, where needed, involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Stevens*, 101 USPQ 284 (CCPA 1954).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The Schermer et al., Ganz et al., and Jedrzejewski et al. references pertain to other microarraying devices.

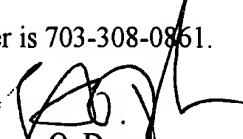
Claims 6-12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven O. Douglas whose telephone number is 703-308-0891. The examiner can normally be reached on Wed-Fri 6:30-7:00.

The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9302 for regular communications and 703-872-9303 for After Final communications.

Art Unit: 3751

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0861.



Steven O. Douglas
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3751

SD
May 6, 2003